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THE BASIS

OF

MORAL REFORMATION.

A LECTURE

BY THE REV. J. M. FOSTER,

DISTRICT SECRETARY OF THE NATIONAL
REFORM ASSOCIATION.

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nations in general, and ours in particular, to "the Governor among the nations" is recognized. And then the chaplaincies in our armies and navies, in congressional and legislative halls, the Bible in our public schools and reformatory institutions, the oath in our courts of justice, the oath of civil office, the laws protecting the Sabbath, the laws guarding the ordinance of Christian marriage, the laws making blasphemy and profanity punishable offenses, etc.—these are but the details of the great leading fact that Christianity is the common law in our land; in other words, this is a Christian nation.

Writers distinguish between the nation and its government. The nation is the creature of God, born in his providence, maintained by his bounty, and responsible to him for its character and conduct. The government is the agent set up by the nation to carry out its will. Now, a Christian nation ought to have a Christian government—

I. *Because the character of the nation is determined by the character of its government*, and if the nation be above its government morally, either the nation must bring the government up to its level at first, or else the government will bring the nation down to its level at last. Twenty-three times it is stated in the Book of Kings that "Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, made Israel to sin" in worshiping idols. The nation was confirmed in idolatry. And in the days of the later kings they became so steeped in idolatry, that God carried them

captive into Babylon and kept them in the furnace of slavery for seventy years, until the dross of idolatry was taken away, and they never fell into that sin again to this day. Philip II. of Spain was a rank Papist. In 1588 he built the Invincible Armada, to destroy Protestantism in England and make the papal tiara supreme throughout Europe. Spain is to-day a papal kingdom. France revoked the Edict of Nantes and expelled 400,000 Huguenots. In doing so she slit her veins and let flow her best blood. The Reign of Terror was the legitimate result. A French general has recently shown that, in that Revocation, France furnished the Prussian army of the invasion of 1870, more than eighty staff officers. Thus her retribution came. France is to-day a nation of skeptics. In 1532 Henry VIII. repudiated the authority of the Pope, and made himself the head of the Church of England. Queen Victoria, with all her excellences, enjoys that bad eminence. One hundred years ago this nation adopted a Constitution which does not contain the name of God. With all its excellences it is, morally speaking, a secular instrument. Being the supreme law of the land, it determines the character of the government. For a full century it has been exerting its secularizing influence upon our Christian nation. And what with Sabbath desecration, intemperance, speedy and easy divorce, and political corruption, we are rapidly becoming a secularized nation. Shall this work go on to completion? Goethe said: "Plant an oak in a vase,

and either the vase must burst or the oak will die.” We have planted the tree of our civil and religious liberties in the vase of a secular Constitution. Shall the vase give way or the tree perish? Save our Christian nation and amend the Constitution. And so the National Reform Association proposes that this nation place in the preamble to her Constitution some such amendment as will suitably acknowledge Almighty God as the source of all authority, the Lord Jesus Christ as the ruler of nations, and the Bible as the fountain of all law, and thus place our Christian laws, institutions and usages upon an undeniably legal basis in the fundamental law of the land.

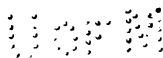
II. *Because civil government is an ordinance of God.* There are only two theories of civil government—the infidel theory, namely, that the State is only a wise human institution, and the Christian theory, namely, that is an ordinance of God. The infidel theory is usually based upon the social compact. This idea was conceived in the mind of the atheist Hobbes of Malmesbury. Denying the existence of any fixed standard of right, and consequently that there is any such thing as virtue or vice, this speculative philosopher resolved all laws into one—the will of the legislature. Here he found “the staff of authority.” Locke in turn found here “the shield of liberty.” With Grotius and Kant, of Germany, it is the *jus naturale*, or natural law. But its clearest assertion was in France, and its highest development was in the *contract social* of Rousseau.

In America it appeared in the convention that framed the United States Constitution, for Franklin says, "With three or four exceptions, the convention thought prayers unnecessary." The form of the theory, as maintained by Locke, is apparent in the political writings of Adams, while in those of Jefferson the theory of Rousseau is dominant. In our day it appears in the demands of Liberalism. They demand the abrogation of our Sabbath laws, the elimination of the oath from our courts, the expulsion of the Bible from our public schools, and that the government be administered on a purely secular basis. The indictment of this theory may be briefly written. It is unhistorical. It postulates a pre-social state as the original condition of man. But of this pre-social state history gives us no account. Man has been in society from the beginning, as all history testifies. It is suicidal. France adopted it for a day and an hour. The French Senate voted, "There is no God." Over the entrance to their cemeteries they wrote, "Death is an eternal sleep." A strumpet graced their triumphal marches. As a result the Reign of Terror burst upon them like a clap of thunder from a clear sky. The fairest monuments of literature and art were given to the flames. The streets of Paris ran red with blood. The river Seine was gorged with the bodies of the slain. And France was glad to abandon that theory, and adopt the only true theory, namely, that civil government is an ordinance of God; that settled order of things that is manifestly in har-

mony with the divine will, that it has its necessity in our nature—"man is a political being," and its authority in God's word—"the powers that be are ordained of God;" that it is clothed with authority and powers which transcend all human institutions, and thus becomes the heaven-ordained and heaven-commissioned agent representing the divine authority among men.

III. *Because the laws of the State come from God.* Law in its ultimate apprehension is the uniform manifestation of the divine will. The phrase of Hooker is too sublime ever to become trite, "Law has its seat in the bosom of the Father, and its voice is the harmony of the world." The Author of nature has established here a system of administration by means of rewards and penalties—an all-prevailing scheme of moral government. It is a fact, not of deduction, but of experience, that we are under government. To some actions pleasure is annexed, to others pain. Virtue is rewarded, vice is punished. The slightest analysis of our feelings is sufficient to show that moral obligation is the obligation to conform our character and conduct to the will of an infinitely perfect Being, who has the right to make His will imperative, and the power to punish disobedience. The consciousness of guilt especially resolves itself into consciousness of amenability to a moral Governor. By whatever name we call it, there is a system of moral government here as patent as the solar system, and we are bound by its laws as certainly as the planets are bound by the laws of gravitation.

Burke once said : " We are all born in subjection to a great, immutable, pre-existent law, prior to all our devices, paramount to all our ideas, antecedent to our very existence, by which we are knit and connected in the frame of the universe, and out of which we can not stir." In the midst of this great moral system, as a wheel within a wheel, we find civil government. Public security, the superiority of virtue, the terrible apprehensions vice is calculated to excite, and the fact that its constitution is the result of the natural order of things, make the State an essential element in this moral system. In this it appears that the laws of the State have their origin in the Great First Cause. God's law regulates the conduct of civil society. Cicero said, "Those who fail to recognize the will of God as the basis of all law, lay the foundation of the government" —*tanquam in aquis*—"as it were, in the waters." Minos, the lawgiver of Crete, claimed to be the son of Jupiter, and that he received his laws from his reputed father. Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver, claimed as authority for his laws the oracle of Delphi, Apollo. Numa claimed as authority for his laws the nymph Egeria. The Emperor of China is regarded as the vicegerent of heaven. Annually he observes a three days' feast, and then coming out with banners and bands of music, he marches to the temple, and while the sacrifice is being offered he rolls himself in the dust, uttering words most disparaging to himself and most honoring to Deity, indicating that as the head of the nation he is



responsible to God. The Grand Lama in Thibet is the incarnation of Deity. In this capacity he dispenses civil offices at pleasure, just as the Pope of Rome did for several centuries in Europe. These facts indicate that there is an ineradicable conviction in the human soul that laws will not bind the conscience unless they come from God. Man can not make law. He can only discover and interpret God's law. When Archimedes broke out into such an ecstasy on discovering a law in hydrostatics; when Newton discovered the fact that the same power which draws the apple to the ground is that which holds the moon in her sphere; when Franklin identified the sparks produced by rubbing certain substances on the earth with the lightning; when Harvey discovered the fact that the blood courses through the veins and arteries according to certain inflexible laws, and when Kepler announced the discovery of the laws regulating the movements of the heavenly bodies, did they make known what were not pre-existing facts? Not at all. They simply discovered the laws which God had ordained, and with Kepler they bowed, saying: "Father, I thank thee that I am permitted to think thy thoughts after thee." It is just so in the moral system. Men may discover the laws which God has ordained, and apply them to the wants of human society, but this is the highest human claim. As Blackstone says: "Any law that contravenes the law of God is no law at all." There is a deep philosophy underlying politics. Though the fact is so often lost sight of, civil

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government is under law to God as immutable as the laws of gravitation. There are many politicians, they know not this; there are a few statesmen, they recognize this. But in the language of the old apothegm, "The heavy heads of wheat always bow."

A double record has been made of this law. 1. On the human soul. "The heathen do by nature the things contained in the law." Two thoughts filled the mind of Kant with ever-increasing admiration and delight—"The starry heavens above us, God's law with us." 2. On the two tables at Sinai. The Ten Commandments were proclaimed by God's own voice, out of the flame and smoke of the quaking mountain, to indicate their majesty and authority; and written by his finger on two tables of stone, to indicate their perpetuity, and then given to the Jewish nation as their constitution. The king, when he ascended the throne, was required to write him a copy of the law, and the people were to write it on the door-posts of their houses, and instruct their children in the knowledge of it. This was a model free government. Our rulers and people are required to do likewise. The State is the divinely appointed keeper of both tables of the Decalogue. The majesty of this law has been committed to the State. Here is the basis of all moral reforms. The Ten Commandments are both a civil code and a spiritual rule of life. In the second sense they belong to the Church. The Church deals with matters of faith, but as a civil code they belong to the State.

Let us illustrate. *The State is the keeper of the First Commandment.* The being and authority of the State come from God. In recognizing this fact, the First Commandment is kept. The State wields tremendous powers. It has power to levy tax, to institute a tariff, and to regulate that mighty factor in our commercial affairs—the currency. It has power to organize schools; to enter the home, take the children, place them in the schools and educate them, without asking leave of the parents. It has the power to draw out all the physical, mental and moral forces in self-defense just as the sword is drawn from its sheath. It has the power of life and death. This does not reside in the individual. No man has a right to take his own life, much less to employ another to do it for him. Sixty millions have not the right to execute the criminal. That is a mob. And yet the State is every day exercising a power which does not reside in the individual or in the mass. How comes the State by this power? The only answer is, Power comes from Almighty God. As the Savior said to Pilate, “Thou couldst have no power over me at all, except it were given to thee from above.” In the 82d Psalm, rulers are called “gods” because they represent God. In the 13th chapter of Romans they are called “God’s ministers” because they are his agents. Civil government is the arm of Jehovah administering the affairs of the divine government among the nations. This links the State with the First Commandment. *The State is the*

keeper of the Third Commandment, as our laws against blasphemy attest. *The State is the keeper of the Seventh Commandment.* It must guard the family against the assaults of Mormon polygamy, free love, and speedy and easy divorce. Yonder in England, and here in America, between 1870 and 1880, divorces and separations more than doubled. In England, in 1880, divorces were two to one thousand marriages; in Scotland, three; in France, nine; in Massachusetts, forty-five. In Massachusetts, in 1860, divorces were one to fifty-one marriages; in 1878 they were one to twenty-one. In Vermont, in 1860, divorces were one to twenty-three marriages; in 1878, they were one to twelve. In Connecticut, in 1860, divorces were one to fourteen marriages; in 1878, they were one to ten. It is down hill in those States, and very steep. In eleven counties in Western Ohio, divorces are one to eleven marriages. In California, in 1884, divorces were one to five marriages, and in Marin County, that year, they were one to three. It is said the regulations are such in Michigan, that a man may obtain a divorce if his wife have *cold feet*. Judge Noah Davis relates the following: A man married a wife in New York, accumulated property, and had a family. Growing tired of her, he went to Indiana, and sued out a divorce without her knowledge, married a second wife, accumulated property, and had a family. Growing tired of her, he goes to California, sues out another divorce, marries a third wife, accumulates property, and has a family. Growing tired of

her, he returns to New York. But wife number one has sued out a divorce against him on account of his adulterous relation with wife number two; so he goes up to Connecticut, sues out a third divorce, returns to New York, forms a new alliance, goes over to Jersey, and in one hour he is back with his legally married wife, accumulates property and has a family, and then he dies intestate. Now, what about the standing of these four widows? and what of the children? We have in this what is worse than Mormon polygamy. In Utah they have "contemporaneous polygamy," but here we have "consecutive polygamy." The Mormon is a "white saint" indeed, as he claims to be, compared with this man. I blush to mention the fact. Yonder beneath the shadow of the Adirondacks, there lives a man by the name of William Jones, and he has one hundred children. The fowl out in the barn lot, whose crowing indicates his claim to kingship there, is superior to that man. We are upon the down grade. It took Rome eight centuries to descend from family purity to family leprosy in Eliogabulus. We have made the descent in about two, and on we are plunging. The air-brakes must be brought down. We must have a uniform national marriage law. *The State is the keeper of the Sixth Commandment.* It must prohibit murder by the knife, bludgeon, revolver or rum. We must learn that it is as great a crime to kill a man with alcohol as with gunpowder. Many centuries ago, Alexander the Great had a pirate arrested. He asked him, "Why

are you always making such a disturbance robbing ships?" "Just the same reason that you have for disturbing the whole world. But you do it with a large fleet, and they call you an emperor; I do it with one petty ship, and they call me a robber. But the only difference is in the size of it." You lift your revolver and shoot your neighbor, and they hang you. But these men engaged in the liquor traffic murder 60,000 American citizens every year, and you license the enterprise, you tax the business. Now, don't you see? Kill one man with gunpowder, and you hang; kill 60,000 with alcohol, and it's a business, and "the only difference is in the size of it." Licensing moral wrong is an iniquity. In England they license the breach of the Seventh Commandment. They call it an "act to prevent contagious diseases." It is an army regulation. It has been abolished in the army in India. Where is the difference between licensing the brothel and the saloon? In Germany they require a candidate for the position of harlot in their houses of ill-fame, to bring a certificate from the established church showing that she has been confirmed, before they will admit her. That is the license system gone to seed. We are shocked as we think of Tetzels hawking indulgences through Europe. Our Government is doing that. A license is an indulgence. Oh for a Luther to lift up a standard against the iniquity! This moral wrong must be prohibited. "Thou shalt not," is the edict of heaven. We believe in statutory prohibition. Then

crystallize that in State constitutional prohibition. Then crystallize that in a United States constitutional prohibitory law. Then God's law will be adopted, for it reads: "Thou shalt not put thy bottle to thy brother's mouth." These illustrations are sufficient to indicate that the Ten Commandments are the basis of moral legislation. They were the constitution of the nation of Israel, and theirs was the only free nation in the world at that time, and they were free because they had the Ten Commandments, the only source of civil and religious liberty. John Calvin and the Reformers of Switzerland set up the Genevan Republic. Every stone in that temple was prepared at Sinai twenty-five hundred years before. William the Silent and the Reformers of Holland set up the Dutch Republic. All the material was taken from the quarry at Sinai. Pym, Hampton, Sidney, Cromwell and the Puritans gave England civil and religious liberty. Knox, Melville, Henderson and the Covenanters gave Scotland civil and religious liberty. They only gave what they found in the Decalogue. The Puritans of England, the Presbyterians of Ireland, the Covenanters of Scotland, the Huguenots of France, the Dutch Reformed from Holland brought civil and religious liberty to America. But ere the fathers had planted the tree of our civil and religious liberties, our enemies brought two other trees, the upas of slavery and the upas of secularism, and planted them on either side. The first upas grew for two hundred and fifty years. It threatened

our life. In 1837, Wendell Phillips said in Fanueil Hall, "This land is not large enough to contain slavery and freedom together." In 1858 Abraham Lincoln declared, "This land can not exist, half slave and half free." In 1861 God came in judgment and cut it down. The bloody fields of Gettysburg, Vicksburg, Shiloh, and the Wilderness, and the horrors of Libby Prison and Andersonville, were the answer. Abraham Lincoln was right in interpreting the war when he said in his second inaugural, "If it please Almighty God that the wealth that has been piled up by two hundred and fifty years of unrequited toil shall all be taken away, and for every drop of blood drawn by the lash, a corresponding one shall be drawn by the sword, still we must say, the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." You know the verdict of history :

"Right forever on the scaffold,
Wrong forever on the throne,
But that scaffold sways the future,
And within the dim unknown
Standeth God, behind the shadow,
Keeping watch above his own."

The upas of secularism still grows. It is alarming in its proportions. Let me point out some of its branches: 1st. *The churchless masses*. We hear a great deal about immigration. They are coming here at the rate of 1,000,000 a year. There are 17,000,000 here of foreign birth, or foreign parentage; by the end of

this century there will be 43,000,000. In London, England, 64 per cent. of the population were born within the corporate limits, 94 per cent. in England and Wales, and 98 per cent in Great Britain and Ireland. But every city in the United States has from 50 to 87 per cent. foreigners. This fact, however, is not alarming, were it not for the additional one, that more than one-half the people in the United States never darken a church-door. Ohio is the only State in the Union that has a seating capacity in its churches for all the people over ten years of age. In New York, in six Assembly districts, having 360,000 people, there are 31 churches and 3,018 saloons. In the First Assembly district, having 40,000 people, there are 7 churches and 1,078 saloons—1 church to 153 saloons, and the saloon is open 100 hours per week, while the church is open 7 or 8 hours. In one section having 60,000 people there is only one church. Since 1880 the population of New York has increased 300,000, and only 4 churches have been added. In a section in Chicago, having 60,000 people, there is no church at all. We know that Christianity is the leaven, but it is not brought in contact with the people. We have the leaven in one pan, and the dough in another. Let this state of things continue and our doom is sealed. 2d. *Illiteracy.* Out of 60,000,000 of people, 5,250,000 can not read, 6,250,000 can not write. Out of 18,000,000 of children of a school age, 10,000,000 are enrolled, 6,000,000 attend. In New York, out of 385,000 children of a

school age, 140,000 attend. In the South two-thirds of the legal voters can not read their own ballots. Take the voting society, in round numbers, 10,000,000, [it is near 12,000,000], let my fingers represent it. One-fifth can not read their ballots—the little finger must come down. Another fifth can not read enough to vote intelligently—the second finger must come down. The intelligent voters are about equally divided between the two great political parties, and may be represented by the two taller fingers. Then the criminal class vote is dominated by the saloon. The thumb must come down, and it closes over the other two fingers. Now, with the intelligent vote about equally divided, and bidding for the illiterate, the semi-illiterate and the criminal class vote, it does not require a man to be a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, nor an alarmist, to say there is danger ahead. These facts form the dark and lowering cloud in our political sky. Let a master-hand touch it, and the thunders will roll, the lightnings will flash, and a deluge of wrath will descend upon us. 3d. *The liquor traffic.* It costs our nation \$1,500,000,000 annually, maintains a standing army of 600,000 drunkards, and sends 80,000 to a drunkard's grave every year. And then the heart-broken wives and widows, orphan children, ruined homes—a scene of suffering and woe which tongue or pen can not describe. It stalks through our land with the crushing steps of a giant, leaving a desolation in its path. We must destroy the liquor traffic or it will destroy us. 4th

Sabbath desecration. In Prussia, 57 per cent. of those working in factories and 77 per cent. of those engaged in mercantile and transporting service have no Sabbath. In England and America 2,500,000 are deprived of their Sabbath rest by the railroad and postal service. The bondage of Israel in Egypt was not a circumstance to this. On the New York Central Railroad, 450 locomotive engineers petitioned for Sabbath rest, on the ground of conscience. They were refused. That is the car of Juggernaut, crushing the liberties of the American people. Two millions in the United States are compelled to work every Sabbath unnecessarily. For this oppression God will visit us. 5th. *The conflict between labor and capital.* Capital is concentrated in the hands of a few. Labor is organized. These are two columns. They are drawn up in battle array. We think of the Pittsburg riot of 1877, when 128 locomotives were given to the torch; of the Cincinnati riot, when 153 men were shot down and the Court House burned. These are but the firing of the outer pickets. If the firing of the outer pickets occasion such turmoil, what will be the result when the two columns shall have collided? Why, our land will be converted into an Aceldame—a field of blood. 6th. *The Roman Catholic hierarchy.* This has a Jesuitical organization as perfect as my hand, the wrist of which is yonder on the Tiber and the fingers in the nations, manipulating their civil and religious institutions. This is the hoary-headed foe of civil and religious liberty. Pope Hilde-

brand kept Henry IV. standing outside the gate of Canossa four days barefoot in the snow. In 1872 Bismarck said: "We are not going to Canossa physically or spiritually"; but he did go. The hierarchy is making an assault upon our public school system in Pittsburg and Boston. In New York they have received millions of dollars from the public treasury. Are we going to Canossa? They are 7,000,000 strong. They hold the balance of power in politics. We may be nearer Canossa than we think. 7. *Political corruption.* Read the *North American Review* for December, 1887. An overseer tells what he saw in the election of the previous month in New York City. At a precinct, before 6 A. M., he saw a row of twenty men with right hands elevated and a ballot between thumb and forefinger, while a man on the curb watched. When the polls were opened they deposited the ballots, and filed into the side door of a saloon. In there was a well-known "heeler" giving out five dollars apiece to these voters. At another precinct votes were sold at from seven to ten dollars each. At one place they were sold wholesale. He found two boarding-houses that had been stocked for election day, and the vote was sold in a lump. He knew that at least a quarter of a million dollars was spent on that day in that city in buying votes. Where does the money come from? Read the *Baptist Review* for March, 1888. Before a great political party in New York State would consider a man eligible for nomination for Comptroller, he must agree to be assessed \$25,000, and the salary for the

office was only \$10,000. Before they would consider a man for nomination for the Judgeship, he must agree to be assessed \$20,000, and the salary was only \$17,500. Before they would consider a man for nomination for the Assembly, he must agree to be assessed \$10,000, and the salary was only \$5,000. How could these men stand such a draft? What becomes of this money? They are brought in contact with the public treasury. Our political elections are the sheerest farce, by virtue of the purchasing of votes. No wonder Christian citizens are crying out in alarm, "We must have a reformation."

Here are some of the branches of this deadly upas of secularism. Now let Christian citizens unite and cut it down before God comes in his judgment to remove it. Dr. Leonard tells of a visit to California, where he saw the stump of what had been the largest tree in the State. It served as the first floor of a three-story building. The house was built over it. He asked the proprietor how he succeeded in getting it down. "Well," he said, "we had an awful time of it. First, we took long-handled axes and girdled the tree, and then we took saws and sawed it round and round. Then we took augers and bored it through and through. But still it stood, until one day a great cyclone swept through the mountains and took it in its awful embrace and swayed it to and fro, and brought it down with a crash that caused the mountain to tremble." Now, what is proposed is, that Christian citizens unite and

girdle this upas with the axes of the divine law, then saw it round and round with the saws of the divine law, then bore it through and through with the augers of the divine law, and by and by God will raise such a cyclone of righteous indignation as will take it in its embrace, and swaying it to and fro bring it down with a crash that may cause our land to tremble from shore to shore. Then will the tree of civil and religious liberties grow and fill the land, and all the people will rejoice beneath its shadow. Then will we know from a happy experience the true meaning of the words of the Psalmist, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord."

IV. *Because the nation is a moral being, responsible to God for the character and conduct of its government.*

What is a nation?

It is not a mere aggregation of individuals. Aristotle held that the whole was before the parts. This nation existed as a body before the individuals now living in it were born. Caius Marcus denounced the mob in Rome as "the detached and disorganized rabble," in whom there was nothing of the national unity. "Go, get you home, you fragments!"

It is not the government. There was the deepest folly in the exclamation of Louis XIV., "I am the State!" The government is the agent set up by the nation to carry out its will. The nation exists before the government, and the government is answerable to the nation.

It is not a voluntary association. A man may join a

voluntary association or not, just as he elects. But has he this option in civil society? He is born into the nation, and is by nature subject to its laws. He is in his normal state in the nation just as much as in the family. The corporation and the nation differ as the artificial and the natural. A "banking association," which Blackstone terms "an artificial personality," is the creature of the nation, is responsible to the nation, and appeal can always be had from it to the nation. But the nation is the creature of God, accountable to none but him for the use it makes of the great powers with which he has invested it.

It is not a league. The late war settled that. The South said: "This is only a league of sovereign States. You have no right to coerce a sovereign State. The right of secession is inalienable. We demand a separation." And except this nation is a moral person the South was right and the war an outrage. But the North answered: "No; this is not a league. It is a nation. It is a moral person. To divide it is suicidal. The Union shall be preserved; peaceably if you will, forcibly if we must." The decision is on record, traced in blood, with an iron pen, that this is a nation.

It is an organism. It has an unity and a continuity running through the generations. The nation of Israel was the same under her judges and kings, the same from her organization at Sinai until the Roman eagles were set up in Jerusalem. Rome was the same under her kings, her emperors, her consuls, her decemvirs,

and her military tribunes. France was the same nation under her feudal, imperial, and republican governments. The United States is the same nation under the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution. Mulford says: "The origin of the nation is not in the will of the individual, nor in the will of the whole, but in the higher will, without which the whole can have no being, and its continuity is not in the changing interests of men, but in the vocation which, in a widening purpose from the fathers to the children, joins the generations of men, and its unity is not in the concurrent choice of a certain number of men, but in the divine purpose in history which brings to one end the unnumbered deeds of unnumbered men." There is a deep truth in the words of Cicero, "The State is formed for eternity."

It is a conscious organism. "The nation," says M. Thiers, "is that being which reflects and determines its own action and purposes." A nation has a life and is sensitive like a man. Think of the thrill our nation experienced when Sumpter was fired upon. Did not the national life course faster and its pulse beat quicker at the intelligence? We aver that the nation has a soul. The French priest, Pere Hyacinthe, said, "What I admire most in a nation is its soul." Moral principles constitute the soul of a nation, and as long as they are preserved the nation will live, for "the eternal years of God are hers."

It is a moral organism. It has all the properties and

is subject to the laws of a living, responsible agent. It has reason, will and conscience. It is capable of rights and obligations. It contracts debts and may not repudiate. It makes treaties and may not break them with impunity. It has a character for good or evil. What is more common in the Scriptures than "ungodly nation," "hypocritical nation," "wicked nation;" and "holy nation," "righteous nation," "godly nation." Even the Romans could stigmatize the Carthaginians with the stinging imputation of "Punic faith," and the embittered poet could speak in loathing terms of "perfidious Albion." Milton, the great English poet and statesman, said: "A nation ought to be but one huge Christian personage; one mighty growth of an honest man, as big and compact in virtue as in body." The different years of man's life correspond to the different generations of a nation's life; and it is no more absolved from obligations incurred in past generations than a man by becoming old is free from the obligations of his misspent youth. God commanded Saul, the king of Israel, "Go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not, but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass." Why are they to be exterminated? We are carried back four hundred years to find the cause. It was because they met Israel in the wilderness as they journeyed from Egypt to Canaan, and "smote the hindermost of them, all that were feeble, the faint and weary." There was not an individual living that had taken

part in that transaction, nor had been for hundreds of years. What had the women done? What sin had the infants and sucklings committed against Israel? What the flocks and herds? The whole order recognized the unity and continuity and moral personality of the nation, supplied a solemn warning to the nation, and taught that national life must be free from rapacity and spoil, injustice and cruelty. Another case. The Israelitish nation made a treaty of peace with the Gibeonites while engaged in the conquest of Canaan. Some four hundred years later, Saul, the king of Israel, slew the Gibeonites, in his zeal for his people. The matter received scarcely a passing notice. Perhaps few in the nation knew of it. But God saw it. And about fifty years later, near the close of King David's reign, a three years' famine came on Israel, carrying suffering and death in its train. David inquired the cause, and God answered, "It is for the bloody house of Saul, because he slew the Gibeonites." Here you have a nation making a treaty. Four hundred years later it is broken by the king. And fifty years subsequent to its violation the punishment came. And it fell upon the people who were personally innocent, and perhaps largely ignorant, of the violation of the covenant. Let any one attempt to explain the facts in harmony with justice, denying the moral personality of nations.

A man commits a murder. Ten years after he is arrested, tried, convicted and executed. Now, accord-

ing to physiology, every particle in his body has been exchanged for new particles, so that the crime was committed in one body and expiated in another. Does the law recognize this change? Not at all. He is the same identical person in both cases, and as such is punished. So with the nation. The whole body is renewed every generation, but the personality remains the same from generation to generation, through all the centuries of the nation's life. A man takes a knife in his hand and strikes it to his brother's heart. They do not hang his hand, they hang his head. If one man kill another with his foot, they do not hang his foot, but his head. Capital punishment means to take off the head. Why one member suffer for another? A man steals with his hands, and they put the whole body in the penitentiary. Why the whole body suffer for the wickedness of one of its members? It is the person that suffers, and no matter upon what member the punishment fall, the same responsible agent suffers. A nation is a creature of God, and at his pleasure he punishes the tenth generation for the sins of the first, as in the case of Amalek; the people for the sins of the ruler, as in the case of the Gibeonites; and the ruler for the sins of the people, as in the case of Zedekiah, whose sons were slain before him, his eyes put out, and, bound in fetters of brass, he was carried to Babylon.

The national person suffers. Hence our officials at Washington became corrupt as the valley of Jehoshaphat, as the Credit Mobilier and Star Route scandals

attest, and the citizens of Boston and Chicago suffered from destructive fires. Our nation supported human slavery, that sum of all villainies, and the War of the Rebellion cost us 1,000,000 lives and \$9,000,000,000. The nation persists in its rebellion against God, and a series of calamities affect the people, from the panic of 1873, down through the grasshopper plague in the West, the yellow fever in the South, the Pittsburgh riot of 1877, to the assassination of our Christian President, Garfield, who "was cut down in his high places." To-day the national body carries such ulcerous sores as Sabbath desecration, intemperance, speedy and easy divorce, and political manipulations. And the "iron rod" falls upon us in the yellow fever at Jacksonville, and the railroad disaster at Mud Run—"the festival of death." "Think ye that those eighteen men upon whom the tower of Siloam fell and slew them, were sinners above all who dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, nay. But except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Do you think that the sufferers at Jacksonville and Mud Run were sinners above all the citizens of the United States. I tell you, nay. But except this nation repent of its rebellion against God and its aggravated sins, the whole people shall perish in like manner. The nation must acknowledge and obey the King of kings or perish. God has decreed it. "The nation and kingdom that will not serve Thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."

A nation in league with the throne of God realizes the perfection of humanity. "The nation is the sphere of realized freedom, in which alone the life of man fulfills itself, and it is to give expression to all that is compassed in life. It moves toward the development of a perfect humanity. Its symbol is the city of a hundred gates, through which there passes not only the course of industry and trade, but the forms of poets and prophets and soldiers and sailors and scholars—man and woman and child, in the unbroken procession of the people. Its warrior bears the shield of Achilles, on which there are not only the figures of the mart and sea and field, the loom and ship and plough, but the houses and temples and shrines and the altars of men, the types of the thought and endeavor and conflict and hope of humanity." These eloquent words of Mulford find their counterpart in the prophet's call: "Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in."

